

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****Patent and Trademark Office**Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/462,109 12/30/99 HIROSE

M

IM52/1105

EXAMINER

JONATHAN P OSHA
ROSENTHAL & OSHA
700 LOUISIANA STREET
SUITE 4550
HOUSTON TX 77002

ROCHE, L	ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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*8*1771
DATE MAILED:

11/05/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/462,109	HIROSE ET AL.
	Examiner Leanna Roche	Art Unit 1771

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 August 2001.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-3 and 5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ . |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Acknowledgement is made of the cancellation of claims 6-17. Claims 1-3 and 5 remain pending in this application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fibiger et al. (EP 0316525) or Tomaschke (USPN 4872984) as substantially set forth in Paragraph 7 of Paper No. 6.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed August 22, 2001 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.
5. Applicant argues that Fibiger does not discloses a sodium chloride rejection at least 98%. However, Applicant's claims do not specify that the specific salt rejection of sodium chloride must be at least 98%. Applicant simply claims that "the salt rejection be at least 98%." Fibiger discloses a salt rejection for magnesium sulfate of at least

98%, as shown in Table 1. Therefore, because Fibiger discloses a salt rejection of greater than 98%, Fibiger reads on Applicant's claims.

6. With regard to Applicant's argument that the permeate flow rate of Fibiger does not meet the requirements of Applicant's claimed range, Applicant states that the permeate flow rate described in the present invention under the conditions of Fibiger would be $1.54 \text{ m}^3/\text{m}^2\text{d}$. However, it is unclear what value, for the permeate flow rate described in the present invention, is used in the conversion calculations. Without a clear description of the conversion calculations used by Applicant, including the actual permeate flow rate value being converted, the merits of this argument cannot be sufficiently determined, and therefore, this argument cannot be found persuasive of patentability.

7. With regard to Applicant's argument that the permeate flow rate of USPN 4872984 also does not meet the requirements of Applicant's claimed range, Applicant states that their permeate flow rate would correspond with a flow rate of 38 gfd. However, again it is unclear what value for the permeate flow rate described in the present invention is used in the conversion calculations, and without a clear description of the conversion calculations used by Applicant, including the actual permeate flow rate value being converted, the merits of this argument cannot be sufficiently determined. Therefore, this argument cannot be found persuasive of patentability.

8. In response to applicant's argument that USPN 5798078 is nonanalogous art, it is important to note that USPN 5798078 was not relied on as a prior art rejection reference, but merely as evidence of the defining characteristics of an inherent property

that is well known in the art. The existence of a water contact angle is an inherent property of a polymer film, and the manipulation of that angle to alter the hydrophilic nature of a polymeric film would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, since it has been held that discovering the optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. See *In re Boesch*, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Conclusion

9. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Leanna Roche whose telephone number is 703-308-

6549. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm (with alternate Mondays off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Blaine Copenheaver can be reached on 703-308-1261. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.



lmr
November 1, 2001



BLAINE COPENHEAVER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700